

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 remain pending in the application.

Oath/Declaration

A new oath/Declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identify this application by application number and filing date is being obtained and will be filed.

Abstract

The Abstract of the present application is objected to because of improper language and format. In response, a substitute Abstract is attached herewith, to overcome the objection. Accordingly, the objection to the Abstract should be withdrawn.

Drawings

Fig. 3 of the Drawings of the present Application is objected to because of informalities. In response, a replacement sheet of Fig. 3 is attached, which overcomes the informalities and is now believed in compliance with the requirements as set forth in 37 CFR 1.121(d). Accordingly, the objection to the Drawings should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 1-10 are rejected to as being indefinite. In response, claims 1-10 have been amended. Accordingly, the indefiniteness rejection of claims 1-10 should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-10 are rejected to under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hancock et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,847,367). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

Hancock discloses a circuit for controlling the temperature of a heating element. Notwithstanding the Examiner's assertion that column 6, line 13 – column 7, line 32 disclose the means for controlling switching time, the paragraphs designated by the Examiner do not mention controlling switching time. In fact, nowhere does Hancock disclose controlling switching time. As illustrated in Fig. 1 of Hancock, timer 15, logic latch 17 and control circuit 10 control periods when switch 2 is ON and OFF. Hancock does not deal with the switching time of an electric switch. As described in the Specification of the present application, the switch time should be interpreted as the time used by the switch to switch from ON to OFF or from OFF to ON (See, for example, page 2, lines 2-11 and page 4, lines 1-30). Therefore, Hancock merely discloses controlling the ON and OFF periods corresponding to T1 and T2, and fails to disclose controlling the switching time as claimed in claim 1.

Based on the above reasons, Hancock fails to disclose all of the limitations of claim 1, in particular, means for controlling a switching time of the electronic switch; and wherein the control means for controlling a switch time of the electric switch control a voltage across terminals of the switch as a function of a setpoint voltage defining the switching time. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-10 recite additional, important limitations and should be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1 as well as on their own merits.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 2, 3 and 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Prager (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0130123). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons as below.

Claims 2, 3 and 6-9 are dependent on claim 1. Thus, claims 2, 3 and 6-9 should be patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, the obviousness rejection should be withdrawn.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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